

January 24, 2007

**EAST COVENTRY TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT  
855 ELLIS WOODS ROAD, POTTSTOWN, PA 19465**

**TIPS ON PREVENTING THEFTS OF PERSONAL ITEMS FROM VEHICLES**

During the past few days the East Coventry Township Police Department has received an increase in theft from vehicle complaints. These incidents occurred during the overnight hours on Grubb Road, Bard Road, Fulmer Road and Schoolhouse Road. Theft from vehicles is a common crime. Teenage kids as well as adults often commit these crimes in residential areas, and walk from vehicle to vehicle lifting door handles to see if they can find an unlocked vehicle. These circumstances are categorized as “crimes of opportunity” because unless the “opportunity” presents itself, the perpetrators do not commit the crime. The “opportunity” arises when vehicles are left unsecured and items of value are left in the vehicle. When the perpetrators find an unlocked vehicle, they will open the door and take whatever they want from the vehicle.

The items stolen from vehicles range from compact discs, change from ashtrays, wallets, purses, and all their contents, stereos, speakers, compact disc players, dvd players, lap top computers, cell phones and the list goes on.

The following tips will help prevent thefts from vehicles.

1. Always lock your vehicle when it is parked. It is amazing how many people do not lock their vehicles. These criminals prey on the easy victim. By simply locking your vehicle the criminal will usually move on to the next vehicle.
2. Take anything of value out of your vehicle. Do not leave purses or wallets in your vehicle. If your purse or wallet is taken you could become the victim of other crimes such as stolen checks, credit cards or even identity theft.
3. “Out of Sight-Out of Mind”. Place all personal belongings underneath the seat, or out of sight. If it is not feasible to take your items (compact disc case, portable compact disc player, etc.) out of the car, get them out of sight.
4. Park your vehicle in your garage. If you have a garage or access to a garage, use it! Then lock the garage! If you have an attached garage make sure the door between the house and garage is always locked. If your garage door opener is stolen from your vehicle, you risk giving the criminal access to your entire home.
5. If you are a victim, make the report. It is difficult for the department to analyze crime trends and patterns when thefts from vehicles go unreported. Even if you do not want the crime investigated, you should take the time to report it to the police.

**EAST COVENTRY TOWNSHIP POLICE DEPARTMENT  
855 ELLIS WOODS ROAD, POTTSTOWN, PA 19465**